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C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 002842

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER AND AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/12/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [AU](#) [SU](#) [UN](#)
SUBJECT: SE NATSIOS MEETING WITH MINNI MINAWI

REF: A. KHARTOUM 02807

[1](#)B. KHARTOUM 02811

Classified By: CDA Cameron Hume, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) In a December 10 meeting with SE Natsios, Senior Assistant to the President and Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) leader Minni Minawi, accompanied by seven of his advisors, re-iterated his plea for international assistance for his struggling movement (reftels). In contrast to reports the previous week, Minawi did not/not indicate that he was considering withdrawal from the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), and he emphasized that he wanted the SLM to transition from a military to a political movement. Based on his most recent trip to Darfur in November, Minawi claimed that he still had strong public support in Darfur. SE Natsios expressed his concern about the deteriorating security situation. He told Minawi that in his discussions with Sudanese officials he was emphasizing implementation of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's "phase one" and "phase two"

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packages for assistance to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS).

[1](#)2. (C) Minawi expressed his doubts that the Sudanese government had any interest in a peaceful solution to the Darfur crisis, and predicted it would continue to allow chaos in the region. He said that the recent violence in El Fasher was indicative of the instability throughout Darfur. He was skeptical that the situation would improve, even with the accession of new signatories to the DPA, because of the Sudanese government's lack of interest in implementing the agreement. According to Minawi, this was exemplified by the fact that the government had given "a free hand" to the Janjaweed in Darfur's cities. The Sudanese government also continued to foment factionalism within the rebel movements to undermine the DPA. Minawi called the grassroots efforts toward a commanders conference a "good step toward unity," though he criticized the African Union (AU) for its ineffectiveness in stabilizing the region and facilitating dialogue among the rebel groups.

[1](#)3. (C) In a brief one-on-one meeting with SE Natsios, Minawi renewed his request for USG support for his movement. He said that as his supporters come under increasing strain, they were likely to "cause trouble" and further increase instability in Darfur. SE Natsios said that the USG was exploring options for strengthening Minawi, but that he could make no specific guarantees. He also said that he would ensure that SLM/Minawi members were included in upcoming political party development programs organized by the International Republican Institute. (Comment: If the USG decides to provide assistance to Minawi and his backers, it

should review such assistance on a quarterly basis,
contingent upon SLM/Minawi's continued adherence to the DPA
and support for a peaceful solution to the Darfur crisis.
End comment.)

[14](#). (SBU) SE Natsios cleared this message.
HUME